The Land Situation

But later on the neighbouring rich men, by means of fictitious personages, transferred these rentals to themselves, and finally held most of the land openly in their own names. Then the poor, who had been ejected from their land, no longer showed themselves eager for military service, and neglected the bringing up of children, so that soon all Italy was conscious of a dearth of freemen, and was filled with gangs of foreign slaves, by whose aid the rich cultivated their estates, from which they had driven away the free citizens

Tiberius’ Reasons for Action

Others again say that a certain Spurius Postumius was to blame. He was of the same age as Tiberius, and a rival of his in reputation as an advocate; and when Tiberius came back from his campaign and found that his rival had far outstripped him in reputation and influence and was an object of public admiration, he determined, as it would seem, to outdo him by engaging in a bold political measure which would arouse great expectations among the people. 7 But his brother Caius, in a certain pamphlet, has written that as Tiberius was passing through Tuscany on his way to Numantia, and observed the dearth of inhabitants in the country, and that those who tilled its soil or tended its flocks there were barbarian slaves, he then first conceived the public policy which was the cause of countless ills to the two brothers. However, the energy and ambition of Tiberius were most of all kindled by the people themselves, who posted writings on porticoes, house-walls, and monuments, calling upon him to recover for the poor the public land.

Tiberius Alienates Everyone

Almost every day, therefore, there were forensic contests between Tiberius and Octavius, in which, as we are told, although both strove together with the utmost earnestness and rivalry, neither abused the other or let fall a single word about the other which p169anger made unseemly. For not only "in Bacchic revelries," as it appears, but also in the exercise of rivalry and wrath, a noble nature and a sound training restrain and regulate the mind. 5 Moreover, when Tiberius observed that Octavius himself was amenable to the law as a large holder of the public land, he begged him to remit his opposition, promising to pay him the value of the land out of his own means, although these were not splendid. But Octavius would not consent to this, and therefore Tiberius issued an edict forbidding all the other magistrates to transact any public business until such time as the vote should be cast either for or against his law. 6 He also put his private seal upon the [temple of Saturn](http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Gazetteer/Places/Europe/Italy/Lazio/Roma/Rome/_Texts/PLATOP*/Aedes_Saturni.html%09), in order that the quaestors might not take any money from its treasury or pay any into it, and he made proclamation that a penalty would be imposed upon such praetors as disobeyed, so that all magistrates grew fearful and ceased performing their several functions. 7 Thereupon the men of property put on the garb of mourning and went about the forum in pitiful and lowly guise; but in secret they plotted against the life of Tiberius and tried to raise a band of assassins to take him off, so that Tiberius on his part — and everybody knew it — wore a concealed short-sword such as brigands use (the name for it is "dolo").

Tiberius deprives Octavius of Tribuneship

With this understanding, he dissolved the p173assembly for that day; but on the following day, after the people had come together, he mounted the rostra and once more attempted to persuade Octavius. When, however, Octavius was not to be persuaded, Tiberius introduced a law depriving him of his tribuneship, and summoned the citizens to cast their votes upon it at once. 2 Now, there were five and thirty tribes, and when seventeen of them had cast their votes, and the addition of one more would make it necessary for Octavius to become a private citizen, Tiberius called a halt in the voting, and again entreated Octavius, embracing him and kissing him in the sight of the people, and fervently begging him not to allow himself to be dishonoured, and not to attach to a friend responsibility for a measure so grievous and severe.

3 On hearing these entreaties, we are told, Octavius was not altogether untouched or unmoved; his eyes filled with tears and he stood silent for a long time. But when he turned his gaze towards the men of wealth and substance who were standing in a body together, his awe of them, as it would seem, and his fear of ill repute among them, led him to take every risk with boldness and bid Tiberius do what he pleased. 4 And so the law was passed, and Tiberius ordered one of his freedmen to drag Octavius from the rostra; for Tiberius used his freedmen as officers, and this made the sight of Octavius dragged along with contumely a more pitiful one. 5 Moreover, people made a rush at him, and though the men of wealth ran in a body to his assistance and spread out their hands against the crowd, it was with difficulty that Octavius was snatched away and safely rescued from the crowd; and a trusty servant of his who p175stood in front of his master and protected him, had his eyes torn out, against the protest of Tiberius, who, when he perceived what has going on, ran down with great haste to appease the tumult.

And now Attalus Philometor died,[17](http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Plutarch/Lives/Tiberius_Gracchus*.html" \l "note17) and Eudemus of Pergamum brought to Rome the king's last will and testament, by which the Roman people was made his heir. At once Tiberius courted popular favour by bringing in a bill which provided that the money of King Attalus, when brought to Rome, should be given to the citizens who received a parcel of the public land, to aid them in stocking and tilling their farms

Death of Tiberius

But after Mucius began once more to summon the tribes to the vote, none of the customary forms could be observed because of the disturbance that arose on the outskirt of the throng, where there was crowding back and forth between the friends of Tiberius and their opponents, who were striving to force their way in and mingle with the rest. Moreover, at this juncture Fulvius Flaccus, a senator, posted himself in a conspicuous place, and since it was impossible to make his voice heard so p189far, indicated with his hand that he wished to tell Tiberius something meant for his ear alone. 2 Tiberius ordered the crowd to part for Flavius, who made his way up to him with difficulty, and told him that at a session of the senate the party of the rich, since they could not prevail upon the consul to do so, were purposing to kill Tiberius themselves, and for this purpose had under arms a multitude of their friends and slaves.

19 Tiberius, accordingly, reported this to those who stood about him, and they at once girded up their togas, and breaking in pieces the spear-shafts with which the officers keep back the crowd, distributed the fragments among themselves, that they might defend themselves against their assailants. 2 Those who were farther off, however, wondered at what was going on and asked what it meant. Whereupon Tiberius put his hand to his head, making this visible sign that his life was in danger, since the questioners could not hear his voice. But his opponents, on seeing this, ran to the senate and told that body that Tiberius was asking for a crown; and that his putting his hand to his head was a sign having that meaning. 3 All the senators, of course, were greatly disturbed, and Nasica demanded that the consul should come to the rescue of the state and put down the tyrant. The consul replied with mildness that he would resort to no violence and would put no citizen to death without a trial; if, however, the people, under persuasion or compulsion from Tiberius, should vote anything that was unlawful, he would not regard this vote as binding. Thereupon Nasica sprang to his feet and said: "Since, then, the chief magistrate betrays the state, do ye p191who wish to succour the laws follow me." 4 With these words he covered his head with the skirt of his toga and set out for the Capitol. All the senators who followed him wrapped their togas about their left arms and pushed aside those who stood in their path, no man opposing them, in view of their dignity, but all taking to flight and trampling upon one another.

5 Now, the attendants of the senators carried clubs and staves which they had brought from home; but the senators themselves seized the fragments and legs of the benches that were shattered by the crowd in its flight, and went up against Tiberius, at the same time smiting those who were drawn up to protect him. Of these there was a rout and a slaughter, and as Tiberius himself turned to fly, someone laid hold of his garments. 6 So he let his toga go and fled in his tunic. But he stumbled and fell to the ground among some bodies that lay in front of him. As he strove to rise to his feet, he received his first blow, as everybody admits, from Publius Satyreius, one of his colleagues, who smote him on the head with the leg of a bench; to the second blow claim was made by Lucius Rufus, who plumed himself upon it as upon some noble deed. And of the rest more than three hundred were slain by blows from sticks and stones, but not one by the sword.

Gaius Gracchus Proposes Laws

Of the laws which he proposed by way of gratifying the people and overthrowing the senate, one was agrarian, and divided the public land among the poor citizens; another was military, and ordained that clothing should be furnished to the soldiers at p209the public cost, that nothing should be deducted from their pay to meet this charge, and that no one under seventeen should be enrolled as a soldier; another concerned the allies, and gave the Italians equal suffrage rights with Roman citizens; 2 another related to the supplies of grain, and lowered the market price to the poor; and another dealt with the appointment of judges. This last law most of all curtailed the power of the senators; for they alone could serve as judges in criminal cases, and this privilege made them formidable both to the common people and to the equestrian order. The law of Gracchus, however, added to the membership of the senate, which was three hundred, three hundred men from the equestrian order, and made service as judges a prerogative of the whole six hundred. 3 In his efforts to carry this law Caius is said to have shown remarkable earnestness in many ways, and especially in this, that whereas all popular orators before him had turned their faces towards the senate and that part of the forum called the "comitium," he now set a new example by turning towards the other part of the forum as he harangued the people, and continued to do this from that time on, thus by a slight deviation and change of attitude stirring up a great question, and to a certain extent changing the constitution from an aristocratic to a democratic form; for his implication was that speakers ought to address themselves to the people, and not to the senate.

He also introduced bills for sending out colonies, for constructing roads, and for establishing public granaries, making himself director and manager of all these undertakings, and showing no weariness in the execution of all these different and great enterprises; nay, he actually carried out each one of them with an astonishing speed and power of application, as if it were his sole business, so that even those who greatly hated and feared him were struck with amazement at the powers of achievement and accomplishment which marked all that he did. 4 And as for the multitude, they were astonished at the very sight, when they beheld him closely attended by a throng of contractors, artificers, ambassadors, magistrates, soldiers, and literary men, with all of whom he was on easy terms, preserving his dignity while showing kindliness, and rendering properly to every man the courtesy which was due from him, whereby he set in the light of malignant slanderers those who stigmatised him as threatening or utterly arrogant or violent. Thus he was a more skilful popular leader in his private intercourse with men p213and in his business transactions than in his speeches from the rostra.

The Senators plot against Gaius

A shower of rain fell just then, and the assembly was dissolved; but early next morning the consul called the senate together indoors and proceeded to transact business, while others placed the body of Antyllius without covering upon a bier, and carried it, as they had agreed to do, through the forum and past the senate-house, with wailings and lamentations. Opimius knew what was going on, but pretended to be surprised, so that even the senators went out into the forum. 2 After the bier had been set down in the midst of the throng, the senators began to inveigh against what they called a heinous and monstrous crime, but the people were moved to hatred and abuse of the oligarchs, who, they said, after murdering Tiberius Gracchus on the Capitol with their own hands, tribune that he was, had actually flung away his dead body besides; whereas Antyllius, a mere servant, 3 who perhaps had suffered more than he deserved, but was himself chiefly to blame for it, had been laid out in the forum, and was surrounded by the Roman senate, which shed tears and shared in the obsequies of a hireling fellow, to the end that sole remaining champion of the people might be done away with. Then the senators went back into the senate-house, where they formally enjoined upon the consul Opimius to save the city as best he could,[11](http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Plutarch/Lives/Caius_Gracchus*.html" \l "note11) and to put down the tyrants.

4 The consul therefore ordered the senators to take p231up arms, and every member of the equestrian order was notified to bring next morning two servants fully armed;

So then, as Caius fled, his foes pressed hard upon him and were overtaking him at the wooden bridge over the Tiber, but his two friends bade him go on, while they themselves withstood his pursuers, and, fighting there at the head of the bridge, would suffer no man to pass, until they were killed. 2 Caius had with him in his flight a single servant, by name p237Philocrates; and though all the spectators, as at a race, urged Caius on to greater speed, not a man came to his aid, or even consented to furnish him with a horse when he asked for one, for his pursuers were pressing close upon him. He barely succeeded in escaping into a sacred grove of the Furies, and there fell by the hand of Philocrates, who then slew himself upon his master. 3 According to some writers, however, both were taken alive by the enemy, and because the servant had thrown his arms about his master, no one was able to strike the master until the slave had first been dispatched by the blows of many. Someone cut off the head of Caius, we are told, and was carrying it along, but was robbed of it by a certain friend of Opimius, Septimuleius; for proclamation had been made at the beginning of the battle that an equal weight of gold would be paid the men who brought the head of Caius or Fulvius. 4 So Septimuleius stuck the head of Caius on a spear and brought it to Opimius, and when it was placed in a balance it weighed seventeen pounds and two thirds, since it Septimuleius, besides showing himself to be a scoundrel, had also perpetrated a fraud; for he had taken out the brain and poured melted lead in its place. But those who brought the head of Fulvius were of the obscurer sort, and therefore got nothing. 5 The bodies of Caius and Fulvius and of the other slain were thrown into the Tiber, and they numbered three thousand; their property was sold and the proceeds paid into the public treasury. Moreover, their wives were forbidden to go into mourning, and Licinia, the wife of Caius, was also deprived of her marriage portion.[a](http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Plutarch/Lives/Caius_Gracchus*.html" \l "noteA) Most cruel of all, however, was the treatment of the younger son of Fulvius, who had neither lifted a hand p239against the nobles nor been present at the fighting, but had come to effect a truce before the battle and had been arrested; after the battle he was slain. 6 However, what vexed the people more than this or anything else was the erection of a [temple of Concord](http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Gazetteer/Places/Europe/Italy/Lazio/Roma/Rome/_Texts/PLATOP*/Concordia.html#5 ) by Opimius;[12](http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Plutarch/Lives/Caius_Gracchus*.html" \l "note12) for it was felt that he was priding himself and exulting and in a manner celebrating a triumph in view of all this slaughter of citizens. Therefore at night, beneath the inscription on the temple, somebody carved this verse:— "A work of mad discord produces a temple of Concord."